THE CHARACTER Of a true ENGLISH SOULDIER.

(8)

BODLEIANA PHILOTHECA

Semper in Bello His *maximum periculum est, qui maxime* TIMENT. *Audacia pro* Muro *Habetur.*

Saluſt.

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The Character of a true Engliſh SOULDIER.

A *True Engliſh Souldier*, is a free born Son of *Courage*, voluntarily put Apprentice to the *Art of War*: A ſtock of *Heart-oak*, fit for *Laurels* to be *grafted* on; or a *ſprig of Valour*, that duely *prun'd* by *Diſcipline* and *Experience*, ſprouts up in time into an *Hero*. Though he take *Pay*, you cannot without injuſtice call him *Mercinary*: for he ſerves his King and Country as much out of *Inclination* as Neceſſity; and differs from the *common Ruffianly Souldier of fortune*, as a Charging horſe from a Carr horſe, or a *Cock of the Game* from one of Dunghill breed; ſo unlike, that they ſcarce ſeem of the ſame Species: For he ſcorns the *vices* as much as the *power* of his Enemies; looks upon the Camp as a ſevere *School of Vertue*, not a Sanctuary of *Debauchery*; and *lives* like a *Chriſtian*, though he *fights* like a *Turk*. He holds it, next to his *Creed*, that no *Coward* can be an *honeſt man*; yet

yet never *bloodies* his Sword but in the heat of *Battel*: For in his *Quarters* he is as *peaceable* as a *Conſtable*, and aſſociates more *lovingly* with his *Comrades*, than *Monks* in a *Cloiſter*: The reaſon is, he is *ſtout*, not *quarrelſome*, and delights to have the *Sun* behold his *Valour*, becauſe he reſolves to do Actions *worthy* the Eye of Heaven. He will never be perſwaded, that *Succeſs* can juſtifie *Cruelty*, or Victory legitimate a *Rape*, or a Storming excuſe a Sacriledge. Next to *Cowardize* and a *Mutiny*, he hates nothing ſo much as *Rudeneſs* to the fair Sex, whoſe *weakneſs* he allows to be their *protection*; being ſo honourably merciful to *Women* in a ſurprizal, that the Triumphs of his *Civilities* can never be *equall'd* but by thoſe of his *Proweſs*. 'Tis true, he is a *Lover*, but 'tis of *Danger and Glory*, whom he *courts* (as *Jove* did *Semele*) in Clouds of *Smoak* and *Thunder*; and appears more *brave and lovely* to a judicious Ladies eye in a tatter'd *Red Coat* or ſuit of *Buff* (allow him but his *Arms* for *Trimming*) than your little ſprucified *man of mode* in his powdred *Wig* and Cloth of *Tiſſue*.

He is ſo abhorrent from *treacherous Murders* or *cool-blood-Maſſacres*, that when he looks upon his Enemies dead body in the *Field*, 'tis with a kind of noble *pity*, no *inſultation*. He attributes the whole glory of a Conqueſt to God's mercy and his Generals conduct; and always *prepares* for *Death*, though he never *fears* it. He thinks not out of his own Calling, when he accounts Life *a continual Warfare*; and his Prayers

then

then best become him, when, armed *Cap à pe*, he looks as if he had a design to take at once both Earth & Heaven by violence. Before an Engagement he sighs out some such short, but zealous Ejaculation: *Lord, remember me* a little, *when I shall be too apt to forget thee!* and then falls on as resolutely and unconcern'd as to a Feast. He is so confident of victory, that he always gives the *On-set* with a *Hallo* and Shouts of triumph; and pursues a Charge so furiously, that he is in with his Enemy almost as *soon* as his *Bullet*, ready, if that misses, with the *Butt end* of his Musquet to do Execution. He fears a *Sword* no more than an *Ague*; and counts, the roaring of Cannons and *whistling* of Small-shot, make as pleasant Musick as the Base and Treble in Consort. His Courage is *natural*, not borrowed from the Inspirations of *Drink*, or thrust upon him by the necessity of *Despair*. 'Tis a base and malicious scandal to say, That his Valour *ebbs* and *flows* with the condition of his *Snapsack*, or that he can never fight well unless *Beef* and *Bag-pudding* be his *Seconds*. 'Tis true, the Fertility of his Country has inur'd him to a *plentiful Diet*, and he would willingly have his *body* in good *plight*, to keep pace with the *vigor* of his *mind*: Yet he can endure the most pinching *Necessities*, and, led on by Honour, will hold out a *Campagne*, though *Hunger* and *Cold* march never so close in the same *File* with him. He is true *Steel*, which may be *bent* by violence, but in a minute return to its former posture. Thus he may be *overcome*, but never *conquer'd*:

for

for he will *Rally* after the *Tenth Repulse*, and pluck *Victory* back by the *wing*, when she is *flying* away to the *Enemy*. Besiege him never so *strictly*, so long as the *Air* is not shut up from him, his heart *faints* not: for, like *Hannibal*, he always either *finds* a way, or *makes* it.

But Valor and endurance of Hardships are but two parts of a Souldier; that which compleats him is *Obedience*; in which our true Englishman is singularly *exemplary*; never did any so much *slight* his Enemy, and so *revere* his *Chief*. The *Roman* Legions could not boast a Spirit at once so *fierce* and so *docile*, that could overflow the Field with more *impetuosity*, and retire to his place in the Camp with less appearance of having ever gone out. The *respect* he bears his *Officers*, is more *powerful* than the Right of *Life and Death* they have over him. He is more apprehensive of their *Anger*, than of the Law Martial and *Ordinances* of *War*: for he obeys for *love*, not fear; and resents their *displeasure* more terribly than any *punishment*. He disputes no *Orders*, but *executes* them; and will charge up to a *Cannons* mouth, or make a *Scalado* through showers of Bullets, and the midst of *Flames* naked, if his Country's Honour, or his *Generals* Command require it.

Thus far we have seen him in his private capacity, now behold him when *Merit* has intituled him to a *COMMAND*; you shall finde in his action neither a *cowardly or heavy* coldness, nor

a rash precipitate vehemence; though he doth nothing meanly, yet he doth nothing with violence, but softly makes haste, and advances with an insensible motion. He cherishes his Souldiers as tenderly as a Father his *Children*, and had rather save *one* of their Lives, than kill *ten* of his Enemies. He does not train by the *Book*, duly reckoning up so many Postures of the *Pike* and *Musquet*, as if he were counting a Game at *Noddy*; but, having a perfect *Idea* of the whole *Art Military*, Theorick and Practick, instructs every one according to his capacity, and *prefers* or *punishes* with a just respect to *Merit*. He endures equal toil with the meanest Souldier; is the *first* in giving a Charge, and the *last* in retiring his Foot. From his *Example* they all take fire, as one *Torch* lighteth many. He hath learn'd as well to *make use* of a Victory, as *obtain* it; for then, pursuing his Enemies like a Whirlwind, he carries all before him, being assured that is the time to compleat their Ruine, when they have lost *Force*, *Wisdom*, *Courage*, and *Reputation*. He is the *universal Genius* that actuates all under his charge, and moves them, as the *Intelligences*, without tiring themselves, are said to turn about the Cœlestial Spheres. Observe how with his *Eyes* he leads the whole Army! How a *nod* of his Head keeps thousands in their Duty! How onely his *presence* establisheth Order, and drives away confusion! He knows in War there is no admitting of a *second error*, the first and least fault being sufficient to ruine an Army; he therefore

[illegible] it his business to prevent faults, not [illegible] them; and makes those that are *Precedents* of Disorder, Mutiny, Negligence, or [illegible] repair their offence to the whole, by being *Examples* of his *Justice*.

His *Loyalty* to his Prince, and his *Love* to his Souldiers, are essential parts of his Soul; he would neither *betray* the one, nor *defraud* the other for a greater Empire than *Cæsars*; little seeming *affronts* at home cannot disoblige him; nor mighty *offers* from abroad draw him to a Compliance! He scorns Honour purchased by *dishonourable* means, is Shot free against the Enemies golden Bullets, and impenetrable to *Vanity*, as well as *Fear* and *Avarice*. He at once subverts discovered endeavours, and guards himself from *hidden* Artifices. Neither the Poison brought from afar, nor the neighbouring corrupted Air, nor Stranger, nor Friend, nor Hopes, nor Fears, nor Threats, nor Flatteries, have power to change the goodness of his Constitution, or *warp* him from his duty.

He scorns to make a *Trade* of War by prolonging it unnecessarily for his own profit or reputation, yet maintains it is never to be given o're but on one of these three conditions: An honourable and well assured *Peace*, absolute *Victory*, or an honest *Death*.

But I remember our *Noble Souldier's* life is Action; he hates *many words*; and I am willing enough to comply with his *Humour*: for when I have said all I can, 'tis onely his own *Sword* that can *truly write his Character*.

FINIS.